



## **Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

### **Executive Department Office of Governor Deval L. Patrick Press Release**

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## **PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES SUPPORT FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF DOWNTOWN BROCKTON**

*Revitalization a Key Component of the Administration's Jobs Growth Strategy*

*Text-Only version follows*

BROCKTON - Thursday, October 14, 2010 - As part of the Patrick-Murray Administration's continuing efforts to promote job growth and long-term economic recovery, Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray today joined state and local officials to make several key announcements that will aid the revitalization and redevelopment of downtown Brockton. Today's announcement included designating Brockton as a pilot community through the Brownfields Support Team (BST) Initiative; announcing several grants for community stabilization and neighborhood revitalization; and the signing of an agreement between MassDevelopment and the City to assist Brockton with master planning and economic development strategies for the downtown area in order to promote job creation and economic development.

"As we continue to focus on job creation and economic recovery, the Brownfield Support Team is a leading model that brings together the right resources and tools to assist communities in their redevelopment initiatives," said Governor Deval Patrick. "The first round of this pilot program proved very successful and we look forward to working with more cities and towns in their efforts to turn blighted sites into opportunities for future job growth and economic development."

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"Our Administration is committed to partnering with cities and towns across the state to support the Commonwealth's economic recovery," said Lieutenant Governor Murray, who leads the Brownfields Support Team. "Redevelopment of these selected sites will lead to the revitalization of housing and economic development in transit-oriented locations, spur business growth in key downtown areas, and boost local and regional economies."

The first of three announcements pertaining to the revitalization of Brockton's downtown area is the City's enrollment in the BST Initiative. As a pilot community in the BST Initiative, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED) and MassDevelopment will work closely with the City of Brockton to identify brownfields in need of remediation before development can take place, along with economic development opportunities and challenges. The BST team will develop an inventory sites that may benefit from state and federal remediation assistance to help facilitate the clean up and future reuse for economic development.

Today's event took place at the Brockton Brightfields site, the location of the former Brockton Gassworks Company which was abandoned in 1963. The site was listed as a Superfund site and remediation was performed from the 1990s through 2004. The site is now home to one of the largest solar arrays on a former brownfield site in the nation, and is a key example of the innovative ways in which former brownfield sites can be redeveloped into successful, green projects that can benefit the community.

"This pilot program will be invaluable to Brockton," said Mayor Linda M. Balzotti. "It will give us the vital technical assistance we need to lay the foundation toward rehabilitating brownfield sites in the city, identifying beneficial uses for them, and most importantly, getting those sites back on the tax rolls and increasing our commercial tax base."

"Brockton is ahead of the curve in its efforts to adapt energy dependency in new ways. I'm very proud of Brockton for having the largest solar energy facility in the country for strictly municipal use. The brownfields plan is an excellent use of this type of location in a very productive manner that respects the environment and saves taxpayer dollars," said Senator Thomas P. Kennedy.

"Brockton has been extremely effective in utilizing brownsfields funding in the past through EPA grant funds. What this pilot program allows for is to assist our already overwhelmed planning and economic development offices to address any unmet need. The first place to start is with an inventory of both public and private property to realize redevelopment of those sites," said Representative Michael Brady.

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"Brockton is moving forward, and we are moving forward together. Over the years, we've maintained a strong working partnership that's allowed our city to shine in so many innovative ways. I'm confident that this latest joint initiative will help us bring sustainable industries to our great city, put our neighbors back to work and lay the foundation for a healthy future," said Representative Christine E. Canavan.

"Brockton richly deserves recognition as a Brownfields Pilot Community and supports the identification and reuse of these sites for development. It makes sense, as it reduces suburban sprawl and helps to rebuild the tax base of our gateway cities," said Representative Geraldine Creedon.

In addition to providing brownfields remediation support, the Patrick-Murray Administration also announced today that the City of Brockton will receive \$165,000 in Community Services Special Projects Block Grant through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The funds will be awarded to three community development organizations that will provide assistance to neighborhood residents:

- Brockton 21st Century Corporation will receive \$90,000 to hire a Development Planner who will work on many issues facing the City of Brockton, including downtown redevelopment, community stabilization opportunities and neighborhood revitalization efforts in the Campello neighborhood;
- Brockton Interfaith Community will receive \$30,000 to hire a Civic Engagement Facilitation Consultant for the Campello Neighborhood;
- South Coastal Counties Legal Services will receive \$45,000 to support foreclosure-related legal services for low-income residents of Brockton's Campello Neighborhood.

"For cities and towns fighting the harmful effects of foreclosure activity in their neighborhoods, the Patrick-Murray Administration wants to bring back those communities one home, one block and one neighborhood at a time," said DHCD Undersecretary Tina Brooks. "To help achieve those goals, DHCD will undertake a demonstration program within one block of Brockton's Campello neighborhood which has been hard hit by foreclosure and will target resources and technical assistance to stabilize the neighborhood, encourage reinvestment, increase access to affordable housing opportunities and encourage economic stability of the residents."

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Today's announcement also included the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the MassDevelopment Finance Agency and the City of Brockton that will assist the City with master planning and economic development strategies for the downtown area in order to promote job creation and economic development. MassDevelopment has agreed to provide \$50,000 to help prepare this strategic development analysis.

"These three key economic development strategies in Brockton highlight a true partnership between the City and the Commonwealth," said MassDevelopment President and CEO Robert L. Culver. "Based on our experience working with communities to revitalize the state's Gateway Cities, we anticipate great things to come for downtown Brockton. I commend the Patrick Administration and the Department of Housing and Community Development for their leadership in this initiative."

This investment is just one part of the Administration's multi-pronged strategy for growth through supporting small businesses; regional economic development; and strategic investments in education, infrastructure and innovation. Key to supporting this strategy is partnership with local communities and the private sector that fosters residential and commercial growth, and the successful leveraging of a number of state resources that spur that growth including:

- The Growth Districts Initiative - by working with communities to plan ahead for new growth and development that is consistent with their long-term community vision, regional needs and with the Commonwealth's sustainable development principles, the Administration is creating an entire network of places around the state where new growth is being welcomed and encouraged.
- The Chapter 43D Expedited Permitting - by working with communities to support prompt and predictable permitting for development that is consistent with community plans, dozens of communities have made a commitment to issue permits for commercial development in six months or less in order to help facilitate targeted economic development that is consistent with their long-term plans.
- The Massachusetts Opportunity Relocation and Expansion (MORE) Jobs Capital program - by targeting public infrastructure investments and improvements needed to support private development activity and business expansion, cities and towns get the tools they need to spur economic development, job retention and expansion.
- The newly reformed Economic Development Incentive Program (EDIP) - by partnering with companies and municipalities focused on job creation, manufacturing job retention and private investment, the Administration is working to stimulate business growth throughout the Commonwealth.

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- Through a wide array of state and federal programs administered by the state Department of Housing and Community Development, the Commonwealth can provide direct financial assistance, where appropriate, to residential and commercial development projects through low-cost financing, tax credits and other forms of financial support.

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